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HAGAR IN THE BOOK OF JUBILEES

Jacques T.A.G.M. van Ruiten

1. INTRODUCTION

This contribution will focus on the transformation of the story of Hagar found in Genesis into the form found in the book of *Jubilees*. I will concentrate on the rewriting of Gen 16:1–16 and 21:8–21 in *Jub.* 14:21–24 and 17:1–14, respectively. However, before I turn to the book of *Jubilees*, I will briefly examine the text of the stories related to Hagar in the book of Genesis. Both stories are part of the central plot, the storyline of the narratives about the patriarchs, especially the story of Abraham, which deals with the promise of numerous offspring who will inherit the promised land, a promise which continually hangs by a thread.¹ This main intrigue is apparent at the very start of the Abraham story (Gen 11:27–32), where it is said that Abraham's wife Sarah was infertile. Stating this fact twice (Gen 11:30: "Now Sarai was barren; she had no child")² underlines the pivotal role of her barrenness in the story and the hopelessness of the couple's situation.³ The narrator reveals Sarah's

¹ For a synchronic study of the plot of the story of Abraham, see, e.g., L.A. Turner, *Announcements of Plot in Genesis* (JSOTSup 96; Sheffield 1996), 51–114. See also E.A. Phillips, "Incredulity, Faith, and Textual Purposes: Post-Biblical Responses to the Laughter of Abraham and Sarah," in *The Function of Scripture in Early Jewish and Christian Tradition* (ed. C.A. Evans and J.A. Sanders; JSNTSup 154; Sheffield 1998), 22–33, esp. 22–27; P. Tribble, "Ominous Beginnings for a Promise of Blessing," in *Hagar, Sarah, and Their Children: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives* (ed. P. Tribble and L.M. Russell; Louisville, Ky. 2006), 33–69.

² I will use the names Abraham and Sarah consistently except in the quotations of biblical texts that speak about Abram and Sarai, before the change of names (Gen 17:5, 15).

³ See, e.g., W.H. Gispen, *Genesis II, Genesis 11:27–25:1* (COT; Kampen 1979), 20; N. Rulon-Miller, "Hagar: A Woman with an Attitude," in *The World of Genesis: Persons, Places, Perspectives* (ed. P.R. Davies and D.J.A. Clines; JSOTSup 257; Sheffield 1998), 60–89, esp. 69; H. Seebass, *Genesis II: Vätergeschichte I (11,27–22,24)* (Neukirchen-Vluyn 1997), 7; Tribble, "Ominous Beginnings," 34–36; G.J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (WBC 1; Waco, Tex., 1987), 273; C. Westermann, *Genesis II, Genesis 12–36* (BKAT 1.2; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1999), 159.

sterility even before God commands Abraham to leave Mesopotamia.⁴ Elsewhere, too, Sarah's infertility is further emphasized (cf. Gen 16:1–2), and Abraham complains about his childlessness (cf. Gen 15:2–3). In apparent contrast with this, time and again God promises Abraham offspring (e.g., Gen 12:7; 15:1–6, 18; cf. 17:2–6).

Sarah's continuing barrenness was the justification for giving her Egyptian slave girl Hagar to Abraham as a surrogate (Gen 16:1–2, 4), but after the ensuing birth of Ishmael (Gen 16:15–16) it becomes clear to Abraham that Ishmael is not the promised child.⁵ He should come from Sarah (Gen 17:15–21; 18:1–15; 21:1–3). Thus, Ishmael, the son of Abraham and Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian slave girl, is the biological half-brother of Isaac, the son of Sarah, with whom God has chosen to establish his covenant. This displacement of the firstborn by the younger connects the story of Ishmael with another central motif found in the book of Genesis, namely the election of the younger child, which can also be found in the story of Cain and Abel, Esau and Jacob, Leah and Rachel, and Ephraim and Manasseh.⁶ Compared to the rivalry between Cain and Abel and that between Esau and Jacob, the relationship between Ishmael and Isaac remains friendly, despite the dismissal of Hagar and Ishmael after the feast of Isaac's weaning (Gen 21:8–21). Ishmael plays with Isaac at this weaning feast (Gen 21:9), while Isaac and Ishmael bury their father together (Gen 25:9).

It is not only Ishmael's relationship with Isaac that is described positively in Genesis, other positive events are also connected to Ishmael. The announcement of his birth to Hagar is mediated by an angel (Gen 16:11–12) and numerous offspring are promised to Ishmael (Gen 16:10; 17:20; 21:13, 18; cf. 25:12–18). Abraham shows his concern for Ishmael (Gen 17:18; 21:11) and circumcises him on the same day that he circumcises himself (Gen 17:23–27). God's command to send Hagar and Ish-

⁴ According to Phillips, "Incredulity," 22–23, they had had a sufficient number of years to experience their childless estate, since Abraham was seventy-five-years old (Gen 12:4) and Sarah sixty-five when they left Mesopotamia. However, when the Abraham story is read against the background of the story of the forefathers (Gen 5:1–32; 11:10–32), these ages are not excessively old.

⁵ Cf. Phillips, "Incredulity," 23.

⁶ See C. Bakhos, *Ishmael on the Border: Rabbinic Portrayals of the First Arab* (New York 2006), 13–23; F. Greenspahn, *When Brothers Dwell Together: The Preeminence of Younger Siblings in the Hebrew Bible* (New York 1994), 84–110; D. Steinmetz, *From Father to Son: Kinship, Conflict and Continuity in Genesis* (Louisville, Ky. 1991); R. Syren, *The Forsaken First-Born: A Study of a Recurrent Motif in the Patriarchal Narratives* (JSOTSup 133; Sheffield 1993).

mael away (Gen 21:8–21) not only precedes God's command to sacrifice Isaac (Gen 22:1–19), but also has several parallels to it, for example, at the point that Ishmael seems to be dying, God intervenes by way of an angel (Gen 21:17–20), just as he intervenes at the point where Abraham is about to kill Isaac (Gen 22:11–12).⁷

Whereas in later literature the conflict between Abraham's sons is sometimes stressed,⁸ in Genesis it is difficult to find any conflict between the brothers. There is nothing in the story that would lead to the conclusion that they are in conflict with each other. While God prefers Isaac as the chosen son of Abraham, this does not lead to a conflict between the half-brothers in the biblical story.

Many commentators stress that both of the Hagar narratives, Gen 16 and 21,⁹ are in one way or another related to each other.¹⁰ Despite the fact that Gen 21, which is set after the weaning of Isaac, is later in the narrative than Gen 16, which is set before his birth, both narratives show many agreements with regard to style and content. The same people are involved in both texts: a jealous Sarah, a tolerant Abraham, and the Egyptian slave girl Hagar, who produces Abraham's child for her mistress, the child being named Ishmael.¹¹ Despite these agreements between both texts, there are also disagreements.¹² Firstly, in Gen 16, Sarah is jealous of the overconfident slave girl who had been elevated to become a concubine. In Gen 21 she does not act out of jealousy towards Hagar, but out of interest for her son. She is jealous of the son of the slave girl and refuses to allow him to inherit with her own son. Secondly, both

⁷ See, e.g., Y. Zakovitch, "Juxtaposition in the Abraham Cycle," in *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom* (ed. D.P. Wright, D.N. Freedman, and A. Hurvitz; Winona Lake, Ind. 1995), 509–524, esp. 519–520. See also the chapter by Ed Noort, "Created in the Image of the Son: Ishmael and Hagar," in this volume.

⁸ See, e.g., Gal 4:29; *t. Sotah* 6:6; *Gen. Rab.* 53. Cf. P. Söllner, "Ismael und Isaak—muss der eine den anderen denn immer nur verfolgen? Zum Verhältnis der beiden Abrahamssöhne im Jubiläenbuch," in *Religionsgeschichte des Neuen Testaments: Festschrift für Klaus Berger zum 60. Geburtstag* (ed. A. von Dobbeler, K. Erlemann, and R. Heiligenthal; Tübingen 2000), 357–378, esp. 357–358.

⁹ Beyond Gen 16 and 21, Hagar is only mentioned in Gen 25:12.

¹⁰ Cf. T.D. Alexander, "The Hagar Traditions in Genesis XVI and XXI," in *Studies in the Pentateuch* (ed. J.A. Emerton; VTSup 41; Leiden 1990), 131–148; E.A. Knauff, *Ismael: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Palästinas und Nordarabiens im 1. Jahrtausend v.Chr.* (ADPV; Wiesbaden 1985), 16–25.

¹¹ See, e.g., H. Gunkel, *Genesis: Übersetzt und erklärt* (HKAT 1.1; Göttingen 1977), 231–232.

¹² See Knauff, *Ismael*, 19–21.

in Gen 16 and Gen 21 Hagar is removed from Abraham. However, in Gen 16 Hagar is also to blame for her destiny for it is her own decision to run away (cf. Gen 16:6d, 8e). In Gen 21, she is not to blame for her destiny, as Abraham sends her away against her will (cf. Gen 21:14c). Thirdly, Abraham submits to Sarah in both texts. However, in Gen 21 he is explicitly required to do so by Elohim (Gen 21:12–13). Fourthly, in Gen 16 (1b, 2c, 5c, 6b, 8b) Hagar is called שפחה (“maidservant”), whereas in Gen 21 (10b, 10c, 12b, 13a) she is called אמה (“slave girl”). Finally, in both texts Ishmael is promised a great future, he will become a large nation. In Gen 16, however, this is said to Hagar by the angel of Yhwh (cf. Gen 16:10bc) and is not related to Abraham, while in Gen 21 it is said directly to Abraham, and the reason for it is also mentioned (Gen 21:13: “because he is of your seed”).

These agreements and disagreements have led to several assumptions with regard to the relationship between Gen 16 and Gen 21. For example, it is argued that while the chapters should be seen as distinct from each other, they borrow their material from a common source.¹³ Another position taken is that Gen 21 cannot be understood on its own but only in relation to Gen 16, and in fact is a rewriting of Gen 16 designed to answer unsolved problems.¹⁴

2. ISHMAEL’S BIRTH IN *JUB.* 14:21–24

Jubilees 14:21–24 is an abbreviated version of the first account of Hagar in Gen 16. This story is very much integrated into the preceding part of the text, in which the interrelated promises of progeny and land play an important role.¹⁵ *Jub.* 14:1–20 is a rewriting and interpretation of the first conclusion of the covenant of God and Abraham as described in Gen 15.¹⁶

Jubilees 14 as a whole is demarcated from the preceding pericope (*Jub.* 13:22–29) by a new beginning in 14:1a (“after these things”) and by an

¹³ Knauff, *Ismael*, 16–17.

¹⁴ Knauff, *Ismael*, 18–19.

¹⁵ For the theme of land in Gen 15, see E. Noort, “‘Land’ in the Deuteronomistic Tradition: Genesis 15: The Historical and Theological Necessity of a Diachronic Approach,” in *Synchronic or Diachronic? A Debate on Method in Old Testament Exegesis* (ed. J.C. de Moor; OTS 34; Leiden 1995), 129–144.

¹⁶ See my “Land and Covenant in *Jubilees* 14,” in *The Land of Israel in Bible, History, and Theology: Studies in Honour of Ed Noort* (ed. J. van Ruiten and J.C. de Vos; VTSup 124; Leiden 2009), 259–276.

explicit dating. The events of this chapter take place in the fourth year of the first week of the forty-first jubilee (AM 1964; cf. 14:1a). The events in *Jub.* 14:20–24 are also connected to this year, since the naming of Ishmael is dated “in the fifth year of this week” (14:24d; AM 1965).¹⁷ This means that Sarah gives Hagar to Abraham in AM 1964, with the subsequent conception of Ishmael taking place in the same year. Therefore, the conception and birth of Ishmael are closely related to God’s promises of progeny and land to Abraham.¹⁸ The events of the next pericope (*Jub.* 15:1–24) are placed twenty-one years later, namely in the fifth year of the fourth week of the same jubilee (AM 1986).

Apart from the fact that the events in *Jub.* 14 are dated to a certain year, they are also related to a specific period. The first dialogue between the Lord and Abraham takes place “on the first of the third month” (14:1a), whereas the second dialogue happens “in the middle of the month” (14:10a), “on that day” (14:18a), “during this night . . . during this month” (14:20a).

The passage can be divided into three units: (a) 14:1–6, (b) 14:7–20, (c) 14:21–24. The first unit consists of the first dialogue between the Lord and Abraham, in which the promise of progeny and the problem of inheritance are the central issues. The second unit presents a second dialogue between the Lord and Abraham, in which the promise of land is the central issue. Apart from the dialogue, Abraham also brings sacrifices (14:11–12, 19), while the promise of land is interpreted as the conclusion of the covenant (14:18, 20). In the third passage, the relationship between Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar is the central point. Sarah gives Abraham her slave girl and he produces a son with her.

The coherence of the chapter is expressed by the parallel structure of the first and second units, by the fact that the events in these units are

¹⁷ There seems to be an internal contradiction with regard to the dating of the events. According to *Jubilees*, Abraham was born in AM 1876 (*Jub.* 11:15) and entered Canaan in AM 1954 (*Jub.* 13:8). This means that, according to the internal system of *Jubilees*, Abram was eighty-nine years old when he named Ishmael in AM 1965. According to *Jub.* 14:24e, however, the naming took place when Abram was eighty-six years old. The mention of eighty-six years agrees with Gen at this point (Gen 16:16a). The internal contradiction seems to originate from the fact that the author of *Jubilees* is following Gen in this passage without paying attention to the inconsistency. The number, eighty-six, given in both texts, is the same. The fifth year in this week (AM 1965) is the eleventh year after the arrival of Abram in Canaan (AM 1954). This corresponds with the “ten years” in Gen 16:3, which is omitted by the author of *Jubilees*.

¹⁸ See *Jub.* 14:21ab: “Abram was very happy and told all these things to his wife Sarai. He believed that he would have seed.”

dated in the same month of the same year, and by the strong thematic coherence between the first and third units, which can be seen in the following scheme:

A	14:1a	"in the fourth year of this week"
B	14:2c-e	childless, no seed
C	14:2f	give me seed
D	14:6a	He believed the Lord
CD	14:21a-c	He believed that he would have seed
B	14:21d	she bore no children
	14:22-24	Hagar gave birth to Ishmael
A	14:24d	"in the fifth year of this week"

The following synoptic overview reveals how Gen 16:1-16 has been rewritten in *Jub.* 14:21-24:

Genesis 16:1-4, 15-16

Jubilees 14:21-24

		21a	ABRAM WAS VERY HAPPY
		b	AND TOLD ALL THESE THINGS TO HIS WIFE SARAI.
	[]	c	HE BELIEVED THAT HE WOULD HAVE SEED.
1a	<i>Sarai, Abram's wife</i> , bore HIM no children.	d	<i>She</i> bore [] no children.
b	SHE HAD AN EGYPTIAN SLAVE-GIRL WHOSE NAME WAS HAGAR;		[]
2a	[]	22a	And Sarai advised her husband Abram
	and <i>Sarai</i> said to <i>Abram</i> :	b	and <i>she</i> said to <i>him</i> :
b	"BEHOLD NOW, YHWH HAS PREVENTED ME FROM BEARING CHILDREN;		[]
c	go in to my [] slave-girl [];	c	"Go in to my EGYPTIAN slave-girl HAGAR;
d	Perhaps I will <i>be built up</i> [] from her."	d	Perhaps I will <i>build up</i> SEED FOR YOU from her."
e	Abram listened to the voice of Sarai [].	23a	Abram listened to the voice of Sarai, HIS WIFE
		b	AND SAID TO HER:
		c	"DO (AS YOU SUGGEST)."
3a	Sarai, ABRAM'S WIFE, took her Egyptian slave-girl Hagar,	d	Sarai [] took her Egyptian slave-girl Hagar,
b	AFTER ABRAM HAD DWELT TEN YEARS IN THE LAND OF CANAAN,		[]

- | | | | |
|-----|--|-----|---|
| c | and gave her to her husband
Abram <i>as a wife</i> . | e | and gave her to her husband
Abram <i>to be his wife</i> . |
| 4a | And he went in to <i>Hagar</i> , | 24a | And he went in to <i>her</i> , |
| b | and she conceived;
[GEN 16:4C-14] | b | and she conceived,
[] |
| 15a | And <i>Hagar</i> gave birth TO
ABRAM to a son. | c | and <i>she</i> gave birth [] to a son. |
| b | <i>Abram</i> called the name OF
HIS SON, WHOM HAGAR BORE,
Ishmael []. | d | <i>He</i> called the name [] Ishmael
IN THE FIFTH YEAR OF THIS
WEEK. |
| 16a | <i>Abram</i> was eighty-six years old, | e | <i>That year</i> was the eighty-sixth
year in Abram's life.
[] |
| b | WHEN HAGAR BORE ISHMAEL TO
ABRAM. | | |

The text of Genesis is very much abbreviated in *Jubilees*, mainly because Gen 16:4c-14 is omitted. In addition to this major omission, *Jubilees* also has some other smaller omissions (Gen 16:1b, 2b, 3b, 16b; elements in 16:1a, 3a, 15ab), but also some additions (*Jub.* 14:21a-c, 22a, 23bc; elements in 14:20cd, 22d, 23a, 24d), some variations which are concerned with the replacement of a proper name by a personal noun (*Jub.* 14:21d, 22b, 24a, 24cd), and some other small variations (14:23e, 24e). *Jubilees* 14:22c can be considered as a conflation of Gen 16:2c with Gen 16:1b. This corresponds with the omission of Gen 16:1b and the additions in *Jub.* 14:22c. The omission of Gen 16:3b ("After Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan") corresponds with the additions in *Jub.* 14:10b, 24d ("in the fifth year of this week").

Due to the lack of an explicit dating of the events at the beginning and through mention of "all these things" (*Jub.* 14:21b), the story of Hagar is closely related to the preceding passage. The story in which Sarah gives Hagar to Abraham takes place in the same year as the concluding of the covenant. In a certain sense it can be seen as the conclusion of this passage. Abraham complains to God that he has no children and that the son of Maseq is going to be his heir. God assures him that he will have numerous offspring and that he and his offspring will inherit Canaan. Therefore, God establishes a covenant with Abraham.

It is made clear that Abraham was happy with the promise of many offspring (*Jub.* 14:21a-c). We may suppose that he thought that he would achieve this with his wife Sarah. Ultimately, they would have children. One should realize that in the book of *Jubilees*, prior to the scene with Hagar, the author does not provide any clue to the fact that Sarah could

not bear children.¹⁹ As we have seen, in Genesis, the first thing said about Sarah is that she was infertile (Gen 11:30).²⁰ In his rewrite (*Jub.* 12:9), the author of *Jubilees* fails to mention that Sarah was barren. Rather than establish her barrenness as a central issue, the focus is on her descent: her origin.²¹

When Sarah remains unable to have children (*Jub.* 14:21d), she advises Abraham to try with her slave girl Hagar (*Jub.* 14:22). It seems that it is Sarah's wish to protect Yhwh's promise made to Abraham (*Jub.* 14:1–6) which makes Abraham so happy. It is significant that Gen 16:2b ("Behold now, Yhwh has prevented me from bearing children") is omitted in *Jubilees*. This indicates that, according to *Jubilees*, Sarah is probably not really convinced that she would never be able to bear children.

The author of *Jubilees* seems to have changed the picture of Sarah in comparison to Gen 16. In Genesis, it seems that Sarah also acts for selfish reasons.²² The text not only reads "Behold now, Yhwh has prevented *me* from bearing children" (Gen 16:2b), but also "Perhaps I will be built up from her" (Gen 16:2d). Whatever the exact meaning of this phrase, it focuses attention on Sarah or on Sarah's interest.²³ Sarah seems not to make a connection between the offspring promised *to Abraham* and her own acts in these verses. These elements are changed in *Jubilees*, which not only not takes over the phrase "Yhwh has prevented me," but also changes the phrase "Perhaps I will be built up from her" into "Perhaps I will build up *seed for you* from her" (*Jub.* 14:22d). With these small alterations, *Jubilees* shows how Sarah acts out of concern for Abraham, which is ultimately in the interest of God. She does not act for her own sake. It is interesting to see that Abraham explicitly asserts what his wife proposes: "Abram listened to the voice of Sarai, his wife, and said to her: 'Do (as you suggest).'" (*Jub.* 14:23). *Jubilees* stresses that the marriage of Abraham and Sarah is an ideal marriage. The partners work together harmoniously to fulfil the promise of God.²⁴

¹⁹ B. Halpern-Amaru, *The Empowerment of Women in the Book of Jubilees* (JSJSup 60; Leiden 1999), 50, 100.

²⁰ See n. 3.

²¹ This aspect of the rewriting of *Jubilees* is stressed emphatically by Halpern-Amaru, *Empowerment of Women*, 34–35.

²² See, e.g., P.R. Drey, "The Role of Hagar in Genesis 16," *AUSS* 40 (2002): 179–195, esp. 189.

²³ See, e.g., G.J. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50* (WBC 2; Waco, Tex., 1994), 6–7.

²⁴ See Halpern-Amaru, *Empowerment of Women*, 50–51, 60, 70.

In Genesis, there is an interlude (Gen 16:4c–14) between the conception and the birth of Ishmael. In this passage the author deals with the tension between Hagar and Sarah (Gen 16:4c–6) and the former's flight into the desert (Gen 16:7–14). This is completely omitted in *Jubilees*. There may be several reasons for this. It would probably have contradicted Sarah's decision to give Hagar to Abraham and the latter's positive assertion. By omitting these verses, the author of *Jubilees* again stresses his positive view of Sarah. The hostile reproach of Sarah is omitted (Gen 16:5: "And Sarai said to Abram: 'May the wrong done to me be on you! I gave my maidservant to your embrace, and when she saw that she had conceived, she looked on me with contempt. May Yhwh judge between you and me!'"). Everything that overshadows the positive image of Sarah and the harmonious cooperation of wife and husband, united in an exemplary marriage, is omitted by *Jubilees*,²⁵ as is the fact that Abraham leaves Hagar under the authority of Sarah, who humiliates her (Gen 16:6: "But Abram said to Sarai: 'Behold, your maidservant is in your power; do to her as you please.' Then Sarai dealt harshly with her, and she fled from her"), for Sarah's abuse of her slave girl would not be conducive to a positive picture of Sarah. In the biblical text, the humiliation gains divine approval (Gen 16:9: "The angel of Yhwh said to her: 'Return to your mistress, and submit to her'"), however, this passage is not included either.

At the same time, it is not only the picture of Sarah that changes by omitting this large passage, but also the picture of Hagar. Genesis pictures the arrogance of Hagar after she became pregnant (cf. Gen 16:4: "And when she saw that she had conceived, she looked with contempt on her mistress"). This incriminates Hagar and is possibly the reason why it is left out of *Jubilees*.²⁶ The long narrative passage in the desert, in which there is a dialogue between Hagar and the angel of Yhwh, is also omitted (Gen 16:7–14). This probably follows from what has been said thus far. If the arrogance of Hagar is omitted, if Sarah does not reproach Abraham, and if Hagar is not humiliated by Sarah, then it is not necessary for Hagar to depart. The family of Abraham thus lives in great harmony, not only Abraham and Sarah, but his whole household.

By omitting this passage, everything that raises the status of Hagar is also omitted. I refer to her direct communication with the angel about her son (as a sort of birth report, which elsewhere in Genesis is reserved only

²⁵ Cf. Halpern-Amaru, *Empowerment of Women*, 51.

²⁶ Cf. Söllner, "Ismael und Isaak," 357–378, esp. 361.

for the patriarchs, not for women, let alone a slave woman).²⁷ Moreover, in Gen 16:13 Hagar seems to suggest that she has seen God: “So she called the name of Yhwh who spoke to her: ‘You are a God of seeing’; for she said: ‘Have I really seen God and remained alive after seeing him?’” She would have been the only woman in Genesis and Exodus who had encountered God, and this was probably too much honour accorded to a slave woman.

The story of Ishmael’s birth (*Jub.* 14:21–24) is presented as a first response to Abraham’s demand for descendants at the beginning of the chapter, which was followed by the promise of descendants (14:1–16) and the promise of land (14:7). In the following chapter, *Jub.* 15, the announcement of Isaac’s birth occurs (15:15–22), also after a promise of descendants (15:6, 8) and land (15:10).²⁸ The parallel structure seems to point to the fact that Ishmael is of equal status to Isaac, but this is refuted more powerfully in *Jubilees* than in Genesis. *Jubilees* 15 stresses the superiority of Isaac more than Gen 17. It is not only said that God will conclude a covenant with Isaac alone (*Jub.* 15:18–22; cf. Gen 17:18–22), but the multiple mentions of Ishmael with regard to the circumcision of Abraham and his house (*Jub.* 15:23–24; cf. Gen 17:23–27) are also pushed into the background. Moreover, in the halakic addition it is explicitly mentioned that God did not choose Ishmael (*Jub.* 15:30: “For the Lord did not draw near to himself either Ishmael, his sons, his brothers, or Esau. He did not choose them (simply) because they were among Abraham’s children, for he knew them. But he chose Israel to be his people”). Therefore, the rewriting and interpretation of Gen 15 and 16 by the author of *Jubilees* clearly states how God’s covenant with Abraham and the promises of land and progeny are fulfilled in the birth of Isaac.

3. THE EXPULSION OF HAGAR AND ISHMAEL IN *JUB.* 17:1–14

Jubilees 17:1–14, the rewriting of Gen 21:8–21, deals with Isaac’s weaning and the related expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael. It is clearly demarcated in the literary context. The preceding passage deals with the birth of Isaac (*Jub.* 16:10–14), followed by two additions (*Jub.* 16:15–19, 20–31). The following passage (*Jub.* 17:15–18:19) describes the binding of Isaac (cf. Gen 22:1–19). The intermediate passage in Genesis, the encounter

²⁷ Cf. Halpern-Amaru, *Empowerment of Women*, 107.

²⁸ The commandment of circumcision (*Jub.* 15:11–14) has no parallel in *Jub.* 14.

between Abraham and Abimelek (Gen 21:22–34), is omitted in *Jubilees*. As far as the dating is concerned, the events in *Jub.* 16:15 are dated to the fourth week, sixth year, those of *Jub.* 17:1 to the fifth week, first year, and those of *Jub.* 17:15 to the seventh week, first year, first month.

It is striking that Ishmael is not mentioned by name in Genesis but is in *Jubilees* (*Jub.* 17:2a, 4a, 4c). In this part of the narrative there is a certain interaction between Isaac and Ishmael (*Jub.* 17:4a; cf. Gen 21:9) which results in the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael (*Jub.* 17:4c–14; cf. Gen 21:10–21). In the text of Genesis there is no explicit connection made between the feast of Isaac's weaning and Ishmael and Isaac playing together, although it is implied. In *Jubilees*, however, this connection is explicit. As can be seen in the following synoptic overview, *Jub.* 17:1–14 is a rewriting of Gen 21:8–21.

Genesis 21:8–21

8a AND THE CHILD GREW,
[]

b AND *he* was weaned.

c Abraham made a great banquet
[] on the day when [] Isaac was
weaned.

[]

Jubilees 17:1–14

[]

1a IN THE FIRST YEAR OF THE
FIFTH WEEK,
IN THIS JUBILEE, *Isaac* was
weaned.

b Abraham made a great banquet
IN THE THIRD MONTH, on the
day when HIS SON Isaac was
weaned.

2a ISHMAEL, THE SON OF HAGAR
THE EGYPTIAN, WAS IN HIS
PLACE IN FRONT OF HIS FATHER
ABRAHAM.

b ABRAHAM REJOICED
c AND BLESSED THE LORD
d BECAUSE HE SAW HIS OWN SONS
e AND HE HAD NOT DIED
WITHOUT SONS.

3a HE REMEMBERED THE WORD
WHICH HE HAD TOLD HIM
ON THE DAY WHEN LOT HAD
SEPARATED FROM HIM.

b HE REJOICED
c BECAUSE THE LORD HAD GIVEN
HIM SEED IN THE LAND TO
INHERIT THE LAND.

d WITH HIS ALL HIS MOUTH
HE BLESSED THE CREATOR OF
EVERYTHING.

- 9a Sarah saw *the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham*, playing.
[]
- 10a She said to Abraham:
b “Banish this maidservant and her son
c because the son of this maidservant will not inherit with my son, WITH Isaac.”
- 11a The word was VERY *displeasing* in the sight of Abraham because of [] his son.
[]
- 12a God said to Abraham:
b “Let it not be *displeasing* in your sight because of the *lad* and because of *your* maidservant.
c Everything that Sarah says to you,
d listen to her *voice*,
[]
e because through Isaac shall be named for you [] a seed.
- 13a But *also* the son of *the* maidservant, I will make him a [] nation
b because he is of your seed.”
- 14a Abraham rose early in the morning,
b and took bread and a bottle of water,
c AND GAVE (IT) TO HAGAR,
d placed them *on her shoulder, along with* the child,
e and sent her away.
f She went,
g and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba.
- 15a When the water in the bottle was gone,
- 4a Sarah saw *Ishmael* playing AND DANCING,
b AND ABRAHAM REJOICED WITH GREAT JOY.
c SHE BECAME JEALOUS OF ISHMAEL.
d She said to Abraham:
e “Banish this maidservant and her son
f because the son of this maidservant will not inherit with my son [] Isaac.”
- 5a The word was [] *saddening* in the sight of Abraham because of HIS MAID AND BECAUSE OF his son
b —THAT HE SHOULD BANISH THEM FROM HIMSELF—.
- 6a The Lord said to Abraham:
b “Let it not be *sad* in your sight because of the *child* and because of *the* maidservant.
c Everything that Sarah says to you,
d listen to her *speech*,
AND DO (IT)
e because through Isaac shall be named for you A NAME AND a seed.
- 7a But *with regard to* the son of *this* maidservant, I will make him into a LARGE nation
b because he is of your seed.”
- 8a Abraham rose early in the morning,
b and took bread and a bottle of water,
[]
c placed them *on the shoulders of Hagar and* the child,
d and sent her away.
9a She went
b and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba.
c When the water in the bottle was gone,

- []
- b she threw *the child* under one of the *bushes*.
- 16a She went,
b and sat opposite [] A GOOD WAY OFF, at a distance of a bowshot;
c for she said:
d "May I not see the death of *the child*."
e She sat down OVER AGAINST HIM,
f AND SHE LIFTED UP HER VOICE
g and she cried.
- 17a AND GOD HEARD THE VOICE OF THE LAD;
b and an angel of God [] CALLED TO HAGAR FROM HEAVEN,
c AND said to her:
d "What troubles you, Hagar?
e FEAR NOT;
f because God has heard the voice of *the lad where he is*.
- 18a Get up,
b take the lad,
c and hold him with your hand;
d FOR I WILL MAKE HIM A GREAT NATION."
[cf. Gen 21:17f]
- 19a And *God* opened her eyes,
b and she saw a well of water.
c She went,
d filled *the* bottle with water,
e and gave *the* lad a drink.
[]
- 20a And God was with *the lad*.
b *He* grew up,
c AND HE LIVED IN THE WILDERNESS.
- d THE CHILD GREW THIRSTY.
e HE WAS UNABLE TO GO ON,
f AND FELL.
10a HIS MOTHER TOOK HIM
b AND SHE WENT
c she threw *him* under an *olive tree*.
d She went
e and sat opposite HIM [], at a distance of a bowshot;
f for she said:
g "May I not see the death of *my child*."
h She sat down []
- []
i and she cried.
[]
- 11a And an angel of God,—ONE OF THE HOLY ONES—, []
said to her:
b "What are you crying about, Hagar?
[]
[cf. Jub. 17:11fg]
- c Get up,
d take the lad,
e and hold him with your hand,
[]
- f because the Lord has heard *your* voice,
g and has seen *the child*."
12a And *she* opened her eyes,
b and she saw a well of water.
c She went,
d filled *her* bottle with water,
e and gave *her child* a drink.
f SHE SET OUT
g AND WENT TOWARD the wilderness of Paran.
[cf. Jub. 17:13c]
- 13a *The child* grew up.
[]

- | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|--|
| d | He became an archer.
[cf. Gen 21:20a] | b | He became an archer, |
| 21a | HE LIVED IN the wilderness of
Paran. | c | and the Lord was with <i>him</i> .
[cf. <i>Jub.</i> 17:12g] |
| b | His mother took a wife for him
<i>from the land</i> of Egypt.
[] | d | His mother took a wife for him
<i>from the girls</i> of Egypte. |
| | | 14a | SHE GAVE BIRTH TO A SON FOR
HIM, |
| | | b | AND HE NAMED HIM NEBAIOTH; |
| | | c | FOR SHE SAID: |
| | | d | "THE LORD WAS CLOSE TO ME
WHEN I CALLED TO HIM." |

The text of *Jubilees* is very much parallel to the biblical text. Some deviations in *Jub.* 17:1–14 with regard to the Masoretic Text of Gen 21:8–21 are due to the fact that the author of *Jubilees* uses a biblical text that differs from the Masoretic. In these cases, deviations in *Jubilees* vis-à-vis the Masoretic Text can also be found in the biblical texts of, for example, the Septuagint or the Samaritan Pentateuch, therefore, we should consider these deviations as variations of the biblical text. VanderKam suggests that a biblical text of Genesis-Exodus that agreed more with the Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch than with the Masoretic Text existed in Palestine as an independent witness.²⁹

Mostly the variations are minor.³⁰ The Masoretic Text of Gen 21:8c reads "on the day when Isaac was weaned," whereas *Jub.* 17:2b reads "on the day when *his son* Isaac was weaned." This reading of *Jubilees* is also found in the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Septuagint. The Masoretic Text of Gen 21:10c reads "with my son, *with* Isaac," whereas *Jub.* 17:4f reads "with my son Isaac." This reading of *Jubilees* can also be found in the Septuagint. The Masoretic Text of Gen 21:11a reads "The word was *very* displeasing," whereas *Jub.* 17:5a reads "The word was saddening." This reading of *Jubilees* (without "very") can also be found in some manuscripts of the Septuagint. The Masoretic Text of Gen 21:12b reads "because of *your* maidservant," whereas *Jub.* 17:6b reads "because of *the* maidservant." This reading of *Jubilees* also occurs in the Septuagint. The Masoretic Text of Gen 21:13a reads "*the* maidservant," whereas *Jub.*

²⁹ See, e.g., J.C. VanderKam, "Jubilees and the Hebrew Texts of Genesis-Exodus," *Text* 14 (1988): 71–85; repr. in *From Revelation to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature* (JSJSup 62; Leiden 2000), 448–461, esp. 460.

³⁰ For the following see J.C. VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (Missoula 1977), 142–198; see also the textual notes in J.C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees* (CSCO 511; ScrA 88; Leuven 1989), 2:102–104.

17:7a reads “*this* maidservant.” This reading of *Jubilees* also occurs in the Samaritan Pentateuch. The Masoretic Text of Gen 21:13a reads “I will make him a *large* nation,” whereas *Jub.* 17:7a reads “I will make him a nation.” This reading of *Jubilees* also occurs in the Samaritan Pentateuch and the Septuagint. The Masoretic Text of Gen 21:16b reads “and sat opposite,” whereas *Jub.* 17:10e reads “and sat opposite *him*.” This reading of *Jubilees* also occurs in the Septuagint. The Masoretic Text of Gen 21:16b reads “and sat opposite a good way off,” whereas *Jub.* 17:10e reads “and sat opposite *him* a good way off.” This reading of *Jubilees* also occurs in some manuscripts of the Septuagint. The Masoretic Text of Gen 21:16d reads “the death of *the* child,” whereas *Jub.* 17:10f reads “the death of *my* child.” This reading of *Jubilees* also occurs in the Septuagint. The Masoretic Text of Gen 21:20c reads “and he lived in the wilderness.” *Jubilees* omits this phrase. This omission also occurs in some manuscripts of the Septuagint.

In Gen 21:8–21 Ishmael is not named. In the Masoretic Text and the Samaritan Pentateuch Ismael is called “son” (בן: 21:9a, 10b, 10c, 11a, 13a),³¹ but also “lad” (הנער: 21:12b, 17a, 17f, 18b, 19e, 20a) and “child” (הילד: 21:14d, 15b, 16d). In the Septuagint of Gen 21:8–21, בן is rendered with a form of ὁ υἱός (“the son”), whereas both הנער and הילד are rendered by a form of τὸ παιδίον (“the child”).³² Also, *Jub.* 17:1–14 has only two designations, namely *wald* (“son”: 17:2a, 2d, 2e, 4e, 4f, 5a, 7a) and *ḥaḏana* (“child”: 17:6b, 8c, 9d, 10f, 11d, 11g, 12e, 13a). However, *Jubilees* also mentions Ishmael by name (*Jub.* 17:2a, 4a, 4c).

In some places a noun is replaced by a personal pronoun, or vice versa, usually as a consequence of an addition or omission: Gen 21:15b (*Jub.* 17:10c); Gen 21:20a (*Jub.* 17:13c); Gen 21:20b (*Jub.* 17:13a).

In the Masoretic Text and the Samaritan Pentateuch of Gen 21:11–12, the expression רעע בעיני (“be displeasing in the sight of”) occurs twice. In the Septuagint of Gen 21:11–12 this is rendered with σκληρὸς ... ἐναντίον. σκληρὸς, meaning “dry, hard, inflexible,” which occurs in the Septuagint fifty times, as a rendering of several Hebrew roots (עז, אמיץ, קשה, רעע). In addition, רעע has several Greek equivalents.

The Masoretic Text and the Samaritan Pentateuch of Gen 21:12d read שמע בקלה (“listen to her voice”). The Septuagint of Gen 21:12d renders

³¹ This takes several forms: “the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham” (21:9a); “her son” (21:10b); “the son of this maidservant” (21:10c); “his son” (21:11a); “the son of the maidservant” (21:13a).

³² Eth. Gen 21:8–21 renders בן (ὁ υἱός) with *wald*, whereas both הנער als הילד (τὸ παιδίον) are rendered by a form of *ḥaḏana*.

this literally (ἀκούε τῆς φωνῆς αὐτῆς). *Jubilees* 17:6c reads *sāmā' nābābā* ("listen to her speech"). The Ethiopic text of Gen 21:12d has no equivalent of שמע בקלה.

The Masoretic Text and the Samaritan Pentateuch of Gen 21:9a read "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, *playing* (מצחק)." The Septuagint of Gen 21:9a has a somewhat different reading: "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, *playing with her son Isaac*." *Jubilees* 17:4a reads "Sarah saw Ishmael *playing and dancing*." Apart from the rendering of "the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham" with the proper name "Ishmael," there is an addition at the end: "and dancing." The Latin text of *Jubilees* reads "with Isaac." Possibly the Hebrew מצחק ("playing") is the basis for the first verb (*jətwānaj*) in the Ethiopic text of *Jub.* 17:4a.³³ The second verb (*wajazefen*; where the Latin text has *cum isac*) is a corruption of *bejishaq*.³⁴ Charles therefore considered the Masoretic Text of Gen 21:4a defective, the Septuagint of Gen 21:9a representing the more original text. According to VanderKam, it could be true that the combination of a preposition and a name (which is somewhat unusual) was misread at some point as a verb.³⁵ At the same time, the Latin version of *Jubilees* may have been influenced by the Septuagint tradition later on in the textual transmission of *Jubilees*. Finally, it may not be irrelevant that the Greek verb παίζω could mean both "to play" and "to dance." Moreover, perhaps one should add that the proper name "Isaac" and the verb "to play" have the same root.³⁶

As has been pointed out, many differences between the Masoretic Text of Gen 21:8–21 and *Jub.* 17:1–14 can be attributed to the fact that the author of *Jubilees* had a *Vorlage* of Gen 21:8–21 which deviated at certain points from the Masoretic Text. Nevertheless, one can point to some transformations which cannot be attributed to a different *Vorlage*. There are some *additions* (*Jub.* 17:1ab [elements], 2a–3c, 4bc, 5a [elements], 5b, 6d, 6e [elements], 9d–10b, 11a, 12fg, 14a–d), *omissions* (Gen 21:8a, 14c, 16f, 17a, 17e, 18d, 20c and small elements in 21:4f, 5a, 16b, 16e, 17b), and

³³ R.H. Charles, *Mashafa kufale or the Ethiopic Version of the Hebrew Book of Jubilees* (AnOx; Oxford 1895), 60–61n29–30; R.H. Charles, *The Book of Jubilees or the Little Genesis Translated from the Editor's Ethiopic Text* (London 1917), 119n.

³⁴ Charles, *The Book of Jubilees*, 119n.

³⁵ VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, 2:103.

³⁶ See, e.g., J.S. Kaminsky, "Humor and the Theology of Hope: Isaac as a Humorous Figure," *Int* 54 (2000): 363–375, esp. 366; J. Schwartz, "Ishmael at Play: On Exegesis and Jewish Society," *HUCA* 66 (1995): 203–221.

some *variations* (*Jub.* 17:1a, 4a, 4e, 5a, 6b, 7a, 8c, 10b, 11fg, 12a, 12de, 13a, 13c, 13d). There are also a few *permutations*: Gen 21:7f in *Jub.* 17:11fg; Gen 21:20a in *Jub.* 17:13c; elements of Gen 21:21a in *Jub.* 17:12g.

4. ABRAHAM'S GRATITUDE AT THE BANQUET IN *JUB.* 17:1–3

Jubilees 17:1–3 takes up the celebration of the banquet on the occasion of Isaac's weaning described in Gen 21:8 and extends it significantly. The first additional element is the dating of the banquet ("in the first year of the fifth week, in this jubilee"). This jubilee is the forty-first jubilee, which means that the banquet is dated to AM 1989. According to *Jub.* 16:12, Sarah became pregnant in the sixth month of AM 1986, and bore a child in the third month of the next year (AM 1987; cf. *Jub.* 16:13).³⁷ According to the absolute dating system of *Jubilees*, Ishmael was born in AM 1965 (cf. *Jub.* 14:24) and thus must have been twenty-four-years old at the moment of Isaac's weaning. This is apparently eight years too high, and due to a miscalculation in *Jub.* 15:1.³⁸

Moreover, the story is not only dated to a specific moment in history, but also to a specific moment in the year, namely the third month. Isaac was born in the same month (*Jub.* 16:13) in which the two covenants between God and Abraham were established (*Jub.* 14:1, 10; 15:1).³⁹ It was the time when the feast of the first fruits was celebrated, the Feast of Weeks (*Shebuot*), which is in fact the feast of the renewing of the covenant.⁴⁰

³⁷ J.C. VanderKam, "Studies in the Chronology of the Book of *Jubilees*," in *From Revelation to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature* (ed. J.C. VanderKam; JSJSup 62; Leiden 2000), 538. According to *Jub.* 16:15, Sarah became pregnant in AM 1987 and Isaac was born in AM 1988. According to VanderKam, this inconsistency is possibly due to the fact that the episode in *Jub.* 16:15–19 is a flashback.

³⁸ Ishmael was circumcised at the age of thirteen (cf. Gen 17:25). However, according to the absolute dating system in *Jub.*, the circumcision took place in AM 1986, which is in fact twenty-one years after his birth! These miscalculations influence the later narratives. Cf. VanderKam, "Studies in the Chronology," 539.

³⁹ Cf. the preceding section on *Jub.* 14:21–24.

⁴⁰ According to the author of *Jubilees*, the date of the Festival of Weeks is in the third month. In *Jub.* 6, it is merely "in the third month" (*Jub.* 6:17, 20; cf. *Jub.* 6:1, 11), but later he becomes more precise, placing it in the middle of this month (*Jub.* 15:1; 16:13). The most exact date is given in *Jub.* 44:1–5, although this is not stated explicitly: Jacob is said to make an offering on the seventh of the third month (*Jub.* 44:1), after which he remained at this place for seven days (*Jub.* 44:3), then celebrated the harvest festival—the first fruits of the grain (*Jub.* 44:4). Finally, the Lord appeared to him on the sixteenth of this month (*Jub.* 44:5). Therefore, a date of the fifteenth of the third month is implied. If this is true,

In the depiction of the banquet, Abraham's feelings of happiness are strongly emphasized (*Jub.* 17:2b, 3b; cf. 17:4b), as well as his gratitude towards God (*Jub.* 17:3bc). Abraham does not refer to Isaac in particular, since the plural form "sons" is used. It seems as if in the eyes of Abraham, the promise of offspring and land is referred to both sons, not only Isaac. He was happy not only because Isaac was born and weaned, but also because he had sons, which includes Ishmael. His seed will inherit the land (*Jub.* 17:3b), which refers to what was said earlier with regard to Lot (cf. *Jub.* 13:19–21), that is, God said to Abraham that he would give land to his seed. The use of the plural "sons" can be easily understood as a promise to both his sons, despite what is said in *Jub.* 15:15–22.

In connection with the feast of the weaning of Isaac, *Jubilees* mentions Ishmael to a greater extent than Genesis. Ishmael is not only present at the banquet. In contrast to Genesis, he is referred to by name (*Jub.* 17:2a, 4a, 4c). Moreover, Ishmael was "in his place in front of his father Abraham" (*Jub.* 17:2a). Apparently, Abraham is also happy because there is harmony between the two sons.

5. SARAH'S JEALOUSY IN *JUB.* 17:4–7

The subsequent passage in which Sarah demands Ishmael's expulsion is very much parallel in both texts (*Gen.* 21:9–13; *Jub.* 17:4–7). Sarah demands Ishmael's expulsion, there is a negative reaction from Abraham, and a response from God telling Abraham to concede to Sarah. However, there are some deviations in the text of *Jubilees*, mainly consisting of a few additions (cf. *Jub.* 17:4bc, 5b, 6d, and elements in 17:5a, 6e).

The emotions of Abraham and Sarah seem to be placed in greater contrast than in Genesis. On the one hand, the author of *Jubilees* stresses Abraham's extreme happiness (*Jub.* 17:2b, 3b, 4b), on the other, Sarah's jealousy is also made explicit (*Jub.* 17:4c). This jealousy is directed

"the morrow after the Sabbath" should have been on the twenty-sixth of the first month, assuming a calendar of 364 days (cf. *Jub.* 6:28–37), which is the first Sunday after the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The author of *Jubilees* does not mention this explicitly. Cf. W. Eiss, "Das Wochenfest im Jubiläenbuch und im antiken Judentum," in *Studies in the Book of Jubilees* (ed. M. Albani, J. Frey, and A. Lange; TSAJ 65; Tübingen 1997), 165–178, esp. 168; A. Jaubert, *La notion d'alliance dans le judaïsme aux abords de l'ère chrétienne* (Paris 1963), 101–104; J.C. VanderKam, "Weeks, Festival of," *ABD*, 6:895–897, esp. 896; J.T.A.G.M. van Ruiten, *Primaeval History Interpreted: The Rewriting of Genesis 1–11 in the Book of Jubilees* (JSJSup 66; Leiden 2000), 249.

towards Ishmael. The decisive psychological reason for the request for expulsion was Sarah's jealousy with regard to the playing and dancing Ishmael. The goal of the expulsion is the same as in Genesis: Ishmael may not inherit with Isaac. Her demand for Ishmael's banishment evokes sadness in Abraham (*Jub.* 17:5). The text of Genesis does not refer to the happiness of Abraham, nor is anything said about Sarah's emotions. The text merely reports that Abraham held a great banquet on the day that Isaac was weaned. Subsequently, Sarah saw Ishmael playing, and this motivated her request. *Jubilees* is no more explicit.⁴¹

Abraham is promised numerous progeny (Gen 12:1–3; 13:16; 15:1–6; 17:2–6; cf. *Jub.* 12:22–24; 13:20; 14:1–6; 15:4–8). Moreover, Abraham and his descendants are promised possession of the land (Gen 13:14–15, 17; 15:7, 18–21; 17:8; *Jub.* 13:19–20a, 21; 14:7, 18; 15:10 cf. also *Jub.* 17:3). In Gen 17:19–21 (*Jub.* 15:19–21) it is made clear that despite the fact that God will bless Ishmael and make him into a large nation, he will nevertheless establish his covenant with Isaac. This is confirmed in Gen 21:12e–13. Although Gen 21:12e (“because through Isaac shall be named for you a seed”; cf. *Jub.* 17:6e) is rather difficult to understand, its general sense is that Abraham's line of promise will be continued exclusively through Isaac.⁴² Genesis 21:13 (cf. *Jub.* 17:7) reiterates the promise made to Abraham about Ishmael in Gen 17:20 (cf. *Jub.* 15:20).⁴³

God tries to alleviate Abraham's sadness with regard to Sarah's request to send away Hagar and Ishmael (Gen 21:11; cf. *Jub.* 17:5) by showing him that Sarah's request is in conformity with what God had said to Abraham earlier (see Gen 17:19–21; *Jub.* 15:19–21). Genesis 21:12e (*Jub.* 17:6e) differs from Gen 17:19, 21 in that the covenant between God and Abraham is not explicitly mentioned. It is merely stated that Abraham's line of promise will be continued exclusively through Isaac. This promise is of course closely connected with the covenant. Ultimately, the reason that Ishmael has to leave Abraham's house is so as not to inherit the land alongside Isaac. While Sarah's self-interest or her concern for her son could be at stake here,⁴⁴ it is also in conformity with the divine revelation

⁴¹ For the problem of Ishmael's activities as the reason for Sarah's actions, see the literature mentioned in n. 36.

⁴² Cf. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 83; Westermann, *Genesis II*, 416–417; P.R. Williamson, *Abraham, Israel and the Nations: The Patriarchal Promise and Its Covenantal Development in Genesis* (JSOTSup 315; Sheffield 2000), 165.

⁴³ Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 83; cf. Westermann, *Genesis II*, 417.

⁴⁴ Cf. Drey, “The role of Hagar,” 179–195, esp. 189.

as described in Gen 17 (*Jub.* 15). The addition at the beginning of the text (*Jub.* 17:3–4) makes it clear that *Jub.* 17 also deals with the inheritance of the land.

At the moment he sees both of his sons, it is mentioned that Abraham remembers that God has given him seed to inherit the land (*Jub.* 17:3c). *Jubilees* 17:3 seems to suggest that Abraham would prefer that both of his sons inherit the land, but Sarah reminds him of her request (Gen 21:10; *Jub.* 17:4d–f), and of the fact that the exclusivity of the covenant with Isaac also involves God's promise of the land being reserved for Isaac and not for Ishmael. Sarah's jealousy seems to be a response to Abraham's happiness, which threatens the divine promise that Isaac will be the true heir to Abraham and Sarah. *Jubilees* 17:1–3 suggests that Abraham not only expects Sarah's son Isaac to inherit, but also Ishmael. Sarah seems to correct Abraham here, who is probably overwhelmed by his fatherly feelings for both his sons. Subsequently, God affirms Sarah's action. He says: "Everything that Sarah says to you, listen to her speech," and as if not really convinced, the text continues with "and do it." Sarah is thus presented as the real partner of God.⁴⁵

The sadness of Abraham, which concerns both Ishmael and Hagar, is more pronounced in *Jubilees* due to the happiness of Abraham being mentioned immediately prior to this. Abraham is obedient to his wife Sarah, and therefore to God. Nevertheless it hurts him. In the passage that follows the banishment of Hagar and Ishmael and which introduces the sacrifice of Isaac (*Jub.* 17:15–18), it is said that this banishment was one of the ways that God tested Abraham: "And he had tested him through Ishmael and his servant girl Hagar when he sent them away."

6. THE BANISHMENT OF HAGAR AND ISHMAEL IN *JUB.* 17:8–14

The passages on the banishment of Hagar and Ishmael and their stay in the desert are very much parallel in Genesis and *Jubilees*. Nevertheless, there are some small transformations. Firstly, there are some problems in the understanding of Gen 21:14 ("Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a bottle of water, and gave it to Hagar, placed them on her shoulder, along with the child, and sent her away"). The phrase יִתֵּן אֵל הַיֶּלֶד especially raises some problems.⁴⁶ The first part

⁴⁵ Cf. Halpern-Amaru, *Empowerment of Women*, 76.

⁴⁶ Cf. Gispén, *Genesis II*, 217–218; Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 84.

of it reads ויתן אל הגר ("he gave to Hagar"), but what did he give Hagar? Probably the previously mentioned objects, "bread and a bottle of water," although they are not mentioned explicitly. The second part reads שם ("he placed [them]"), but what did he place? The answer could be the same, "the bread and the bottle of water." However, had he not just given these to her? Or was it the child, which is preceded by the *nota-accusativi*, but then it is strange that there is also a copula ו (ואת הילד). This could suggest of course that he put both the bread and the bottle *and* the child on her shoulders. This is the opinion of many modern commentators and is reflected in many translations.⁴⁷ The Septuagint of Gen 21:14cd presents the phrase as: "And he gave it to Agar, and he placed her also the child on the shoulder." The fact that Ishmael is either sixteen or perhaps even twenty-four-years old is probably of no importance. Another suggestion is that ואת הילד still depends on ויתן. In this case, the translation should be: "and he gave it (i.e., bread and water) to Hagar, placed them (bread and water) on her shoulder, and he gave (to her) also the child." *Jubilees* 17:8 attempts to solve all these problems by simplifying the phrase: "He took food and a bottle of water and he placed them *on the shoulders of Hagar and the child*." In any case, the author of *Jubilees* must have realized that it would have been quite difficult to put a son, who, according to the absolute dating system of *Jubilees* was already twenty-four-years old, on the shoulders of his mother, together with the food and the water.

Despite his age, in this part of the text *Jubilees* calls Ishmael "child," as does Genesis (הילד). Moreover, the author does not hesitate to dwell on the fate of Ishmael as he and his mother wander in the desert. In fact, he emphasizes the dependence of Ishmael on his mother, as can be seen in the additions of *Jub.* 17:9d–10b.

Jubilees eliminates an inconsistency in the biblical text of Gen 21:16–17, in which Hagar cries out, while God hears the voice of the boy: "She sat down over against him, and she lifted up her voice and she cried. And God heard the voice of the lad." In *Jubilees*, it is an angel of God who informs Hagar that "the Lord has heard *your* voice, and *has seen* the child" (*Jub.* 17:11fg). Subsequently, it is Hagar *herself* who opens her eyes, and not God, as in the biblical text. Whatever the meaning, there is no direct contact between God and Hagar. This is in line with the omission of the desert passage of Gen 14, where Hagar says that she has seen God.

⁴⁷ See, e.g., Wenham, *Genesis* 16–50, 84.

7. CONCLUSION

In this contribution, we have looked at the way in which the story of Hagar in Genesis 16 and 21 was rewritten in the book of *Jubilees*. In summary, it can be said that *Jubilees* alters the first account (Gen 16:1–16; *Jub.* 14:21–24) mainly through omissions. According to *Jubilees*, Abraham's entire family lives in great harmony and not only Abraham and Sarah. It does not report the tension between Hagar and Sarah, and therefore it is not necessary to speak about Hagar's flight into the wilderness and her subsequent return. This, consequently, changes the picture of both Sarah and Hagar in *Jubilees*. Sarah is depicted more positively, and while Hagar's status is neither raised nor lowered, her relationship to Sarah is altered. Moreover, the birth of Ishmael is closely connected to the concluding of the covenant and its promises of progeny and land. The second account in *Jubilees* is very much parallel to the biblical text (Gen 21:8–21; *Jub.* 17:1–14), although there are some deviations. On the occasion of the feast celebrating Isaac's weaning, both Ishmael and his mother Hagar are present. *Jubilees* pays more attention to Ishmael when describing this feast than does Genesis. Ishmael is not only present at the banquet but is also referred to by name and is reported to be "in his place in front of his father Abraham" (*Jub.* 17:2a). Abraham is also said to be happy because of this family harmony. This happiness seems to trigger Sarah's jealousy because it threatens the divine promise that Isaac will be the true heir of Abraham and Sarah. God affirms Sarah's right to send Hagar and Ishmael away. In anticipation of Isaac's binding, the banishment of Hagar and Ishmael is also said to be one of the ways that God tested Abraham (*Jub.* 17:15).

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